NOAA FY 2000 Budget Request Fact Sheet

YEAR OF THE OCEAN INITIATIVE

Promoting Safe Navigation

NOAA requests an increase of $5.2 million in FY 2000 to support safe and efficient marine commerce through the delivery of highly accurate, state-of-the-art, Federal navigation and positioning information services. This investment in NOAA's suite of Navigation Services will improve the competitiveness of U.S. ports and exports while lowering the risk of marine accidents, including environmental catastrophes from oil and chemical spills. NOAA's Navigation Services request supports a key pledge, Ports for the 21st Century, made by the President at the National Ocean Conference in 1998, and complements other Year of the Ocean initiatives seeking to explore, protect and restore America's vital ocean resources.

The Challenges to Safe Marine Transportation

Expanding trade and the emergence of a more global economy are increasing the amount of goods moving through the nation's ports. In addition, the length, width, and draft of vessels carrying those goods have grown dramatically. Major commercial ports also are home to a growing number of recreational boaters, increasing the risk of accidents and conflicts among users of the nation's waterways.

- About 98% of trade by weight (excluding Mexico and Canada), including virtually all chemical and petroleum products, moves by sea;
- The volume of goods in marine commerce is expected to double, or perhaps even triple, during the next 20 years;
- The length, width, and draft of vessels in international commerce have doubled in the last half century;
- One major oil spill can cost billions of dollars to restore habitat, burdening governments and the private sector with litigation, regulation, cleanup, and remediation expenses;
- During 1996, NOAA responded to 69 spills, including a 1.9 million gallon spill of caustic soda near Flagler Beach, FL, and the North Cape spill of 825,000 gallons of diesel fuel off Narragansett, RI.

NOAA Budget	FY 2000 Change $M
National Ocean Service (OR&F)	
Navigation Services	
(Ports for the 21st Century)	$5.2
Ocean Resources Conservation & Assessment	
(Exploring the Last Frontier)	$1.0
(Coral Reef Protection)	$2.0
National Marine Fisheries Service (OR&F)	
Conservation and Management Operations	
(Magnuson-Stevens Act)	$2.6
(Observers)	$2.0
Information Collection and Analysis	
(Fisheries Oceanography)	$1.6
(Aquaculture)	$1.0
Oceanic & Atmospheric Research (OR&F)	
Climate and Air Quality Research	
(Ocean Climate Variability)	$4.0
Oceans and Great Lakes	
(Aquaculture)	$3.6
(Fisheries Oceanography)	$0.4
(Ocean Observatories)	$3.1
Procurement, Acquisition, & Construction Account	
(Fisheries Research Vessels)	$51.6
NOAA Year of the Ocean Initiative -- Total	**$78.1**

Responding to the Challenge

The implementation and integration of new technologies—such as real-time oceanographic and marine meteorologic data, full-bottom surveys, digital nautical charts, and GPS applications—will provide mariners with precise-depth data that will reduce safety and environmental risks due to increased vessel traffic and size. For FY 2000:

- The $2.8 million increase to the Tide and Currents line item will enable NOAA to establish a quality assurance program for expanded implementation of Physical Oceanographic Real-Time Systems (PORTS). PORTS provide mariners with accurate, and up-to-date tide, current, wind and other relevant oceanographic and meteorological information. New PORTS will be established through cost-sharing partnerships requiring that installation and ongoing local operation and maintenance costs be paid for by local partners or other sources. In fact, several locations are prepared to provide funds to NOAA to design, implement and operate new PORTS. These include Narragansett, RI; New Haven, CT; Philadelphia, PA; Sault Ste Marie, MI; and, Charleston, SC. While local operating expenses for PORTS are to be provided by the local/state entities, NOAA's role is to maintain the federal responsibility to ensure data quality and standardization for these additional systems;

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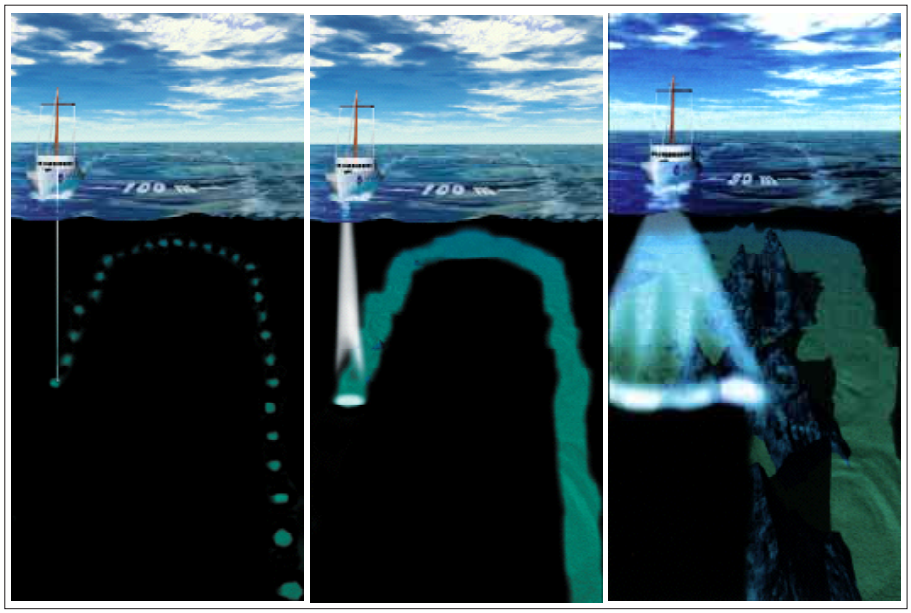
Today's deeper-draft vessels require that mariners have access to accurate, up-to-date environmental information.

- The $0.9 million increase to the Address Survey Backlog line item will further reduce a critical backlog of hydrographic surveying requirements through contracts with the private sector. NOAA and its partners are utilizing state-of-the-art multi-beam and side-scan surveying technologies that provide full-bottom coverage of the ocean floor;
- The $1 million increase to the Mapping and Charting line item will help ensure new survey data is charted in a timely manner. This funding will support the implementation of vector digital charts and print-on-demand technologies; and
- The addition of $500,000 for Geodesy will support continued improvements and access to the National Spatial Reference System and height modernization activities that are particularly critical to under-keel clearance for deep-draft vessels. (Note: this increase is offset by a requested decrease, resulting in level funding for the program.)



Advances in hydrographic surveying technology provide full-bottom coverage and precisely locate shoals, rocks, wrecks, and other obstructions in high-traffic areas and major ports.

NOAA's Role

NOAA's principle missions are to describe and predict changes in the Earth's environment, and to conserve and manage wisely the Nation's coastal and marine resources to ensure sustainable economic opportunities. NOAA is home to the federal government's oldest science-based program, which, since 1807, has conducted hydrographic surveys and provided mariners with nautical charts, tide and current predictions, and geodetic positioning services. Many of these services fulfill international obligations.

Today, NOAA is utilizing contracting, cooperative agreements, and partnerships with the private sector to fulfill many of its responsibilities in support of safe marine transportation. Half of NOAA's hydrographic surveys are being conducted by the private sector; all of NOAA's new digital charting and print-on-demand products are being developed and will be distributed through cooperative research and development agreements with the private sector; NOAA has entered into a cooperative research and development agreement to expand implementation of Physical Oceanographic Real Time System (PORTS) technology; and all PORTS installations are being designed and installed in partnership with local authorities and interests through a cost-sharing agreement.

NOAA is the nation's primary ocean steward and marine resource trustee. NOAA works with states, local authorities, and the private sector in support of sustainable coastal communities and economies. Data acquired to provide navigation services also provides important information for coastal resource managers and decision makers. NOAA's mix of world-class science and partnership-based resource management makes it uniquely qualified to provide navigation information services and to maximize other uses of this valuable scientific data.

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